

PROPOSED COUNCIL STUDY ISSUEFor Calendar Year: 2002Continuing ☐Mandatory ☐New ☒Previous Year (below line/defer) ☐

Issue: Study the critical communications skills training and building community trust within Public Safety.

Lead Department: DPS

General Plan Element or Sub-Element:

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

A. Study the interpersonal communications training officers receive in dealing with people who present potential safety and flight risks to officers. Identify other sources of training to improve communications in those challenging circumstances so as to improve the outcomes of the interaction and raise the level of safety of all concerned.

Describe the above in terms of:

1. Recruit training
2. Field training
3. In-service training
4. Policy, procedures and techniques
5. Equipment

B. Determine the extent of community trust of the department and improvement opportunities:

1. Conduct an independent survey of community trust in the police. Break the results down by area, demographics, nature and extent of contact with the department, and level of satisfaction.

2. Examine methods to enrich officers' knowledge of the various cultures represented within Sunnyvale and how those cultural patterns affect residents' interactions with their police officers.

3. Explore additional methods of community outreach for the department. Examined here are methods that may be employed to initiate or improve the depth and breadth of dialogue with residents of Sunnyvale. The study would uncover

opportunities for input on community problems and opportunities for improving residents' perception of safety at home, at work, at school and while patronizing Sunnyvale based businesses.

4. Identify the means with which to help communities to organize themselves into neighborhood associations, block watches, or communities of interest. This study element addresses the importance of community groups in holding the department accountable for performance around where people live, work, or socialize.

5. Study the Department's demographic composition to determine to extent to which it reflect the community it serves. For example, in the last two years the department improved its female and minority representation within its sworn ranks from 20% to 33%. What additional steps can be taken to improve representation even further?

6. Determine best practices in total quality of service delivery. Explore ways of appropriate implementation within Sunnyvale DPS.

7. Identify best methods of reporting periodic department service trends and outcomes to the community.

8. Study methods of improving community knowledge base of how to contact the department to comment on officer performance - positive or negative. Include methods of communicating that information in various languages

2. **How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?**

3. **Origin of issue:**

Councilmember: Vorreiter

General Plan: _____

Staff: _____

BOARD or COMMISSION

Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Library	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bldg. Code of Appeals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parks & Rec.	<input type="checkbox"/>
CCAB	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heritage & Preservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing & Human Svcs	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Board / Commission Ranking/Comment:

Board / Commission ranked _____ of _____

4. Due date for Continuing and Mandatory issues (if known): _____

5. Multiple Year Project? Yes ☐ No ☒ Expected Year of Completion 2003
 Work plan by mid-year; total project completion - 2003

6. Estimated work hours for completion of the study issue.

(a) Estimated work hours from the lead department 200

(b) Estimated work hours from consultant(s): 200

(c) Estimated work hours from the City Attorney's Office: 5

(d) List any other department(s) and number of work hours:

Department(s): OCM 120
 HR 80

Total Estimated Hours: 605

7. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

(a) Does Council need to approve a work plan? Yes ☒ No ☐

(b) Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, which Board/Commission? _____

(c) Is a Council Study Session anticipated? Yes ☒ No ☐

(d) What is the public participation process?

To be determined

8. **Estimated Fiscal Impact:**

Cost of Study	\$ 40,000.00
Capital Budget Costs	\$
New Annual Operating Costs	\$unknown at this time
New Revenues or Savings	\$
10 Year RAP Total	\$

9. **Staff Recommendation**

- ☐ Recommended for Study
☐ Against Study
☒ No Recommendation

Explain below staff's recommendation if "for" or "against" study. Department director should also note the relative importance of this study to other major projects that the department is currently working on or that are soon to begin, and the impact on existing services/priorities.

The most critical element for a successful police department is community trust. Trust is at the core of a police department's problem-solving, crime-prevention and crime-fighting strategies. Without that trust, members of the community would be reluctant to involve the police when they are victims of crimes, and would be unlikely to call the police to mediate their disputes or to step forward as a witness to a crime. In short, without a foundation of trust, the police are left with few opportunities to impact crime and disorder. In Sunnyvale the deep rooted trust levels have enabled us to enjoy some of the lowest crime rates and highest safety ratings in the country.

By all measures, Sunnyvale DPS deserves the already high level of trust invested in it by the community. High rates of community satisfaction and low levels of complaints combine to paint a very bright picture of the regard and trust between our department and community it serves. Those high levels of trust do not occur by accident. They are nurtured by continuous excellence in customer service. They speak to the way officers interact with members of this community on a daily basis, in responding to emergencies, in providing emergency medical attention at accident scenes, and even in issuing of traffic citations.

The fact that Sunnyvale is a community undergoing change; changing demographics, an aging community, and further urbanization poses greater challenges in the assessment of that trust. Many of our residents are foreign born and use English as their second language. Some come from areas where suspicion rather than trust in government prevails. More specifically, the police who are often seen as the most visible agent of that government become the focal point for that mistrust. Given those

dynamics, I feel that this study issue should address factors that contribute to or detract from the community's trust, and examine methods we can employ to improve that trust.

Three elements stand out as keys to maintaining community trust. The community must have confidence that officers are properly prepared to deal with volatile circumstances where they engage potentially violent or uncooperative people. The public should take comfort in knowing that their officers are aptly schooled, trained and equipped with the most up to date humanitarian techniques available to diffuse even the most volatile situations.

Of equal importance is an accessible and open process available for members of the community to raise their concerns about police performance. The public must be confident that should they have questions or concerns about either overall department performance or the performance of an individual officer, there would be ample opportunities to objectively investigate those concerns. If warranted, the community must be assured that appropriate follow-up or corrective action will result. Likewise, the community should be aware of the processes in effect for the department to proactively review officer performance within a system of continuous improvement.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the department and the community needs to continuously explore opportunities to improve its relationship so that greater understanding and trust result. Neighborhoods and communities of interest should have ready and regular opportunities for dialogue with the department so that enforcement priorities, expectations, problems and opportunities can be identified and pursued. This lies at the heart of Community Policing, and allows for the broadest base of police accountability; accountability directly to those served.

SUMMARY

Taken as a whole, this study issue will go a long way in improving dialogue between Sunnyvale DPS and the community. It would place officers and community members in closer contact so as to maintain communication and trust. Moreover, the study issue would enable the community to have direct input to their service providers so that the provided service more closely matches their needs. Additionally, should problems or complaints arise, the community will be knowledgeable about the complaint process, and their rights. THIS STUDY ISSUE WILL CONTINUE TO PREPARE SUNNYVALE DPS AND THE RESIDENTS OF SUNNYVALE TO MAINTAIN ITS REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE INTO THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

City Manager

Date